

**Land Use and Ownership Assessment****The following information was excerpted from the Lake Whatcom Water Source Protection Plan – April 2000**

Map C-1 depicts the Whatcom County Title 20 zoning designations within the Lake Whatcom watershed. Whatcom County's portion of the watershed is zoned for a mix of forestry, residential, rural, and recreational land uses. Approximately 70% of the County's portion is zoned commercial and rural forestry (CF, RF), 13% residential (UR-MX, UR3, URM12, RR1, RR2), 16% rural (R2A, R5A), and 1% recreation, resort and neighborhood commercial (ROS, RC, NC). Assessor data from 1999, shows that actual land use in the Lake Whatcom watershed is similar to that zoned, being composed of 72.5% forestry and mining (with minimal levels of mining); 11.9% vacant; 10.3% residential; 3.1% parks, open space and services; 0.8% commercial; 0.3% agricultural; and 1.1% miscellaneous. There are three County areas zoned urban residential (UR3, UR-MX, URM12) including Sudden Valley, the Geneva Urban Growth Area, and the County Fringe Urban Growth Area.

(Note: Skagit County has been added to Map C-1. Though Skagit County's Title 20 zoning designation titles differ from Whatcom County, the allowable land uses are generally consistent. Therefore, Whatcom County titles are utilized to integrate this information into the map).

## City of Bellingham

Portions of the City of Bellingham are located within the Lake Whatcom watershed including the Alabama Hill and Silver Beach neighborhood planning areas, and, to a lesser extent, the Whatcom Falls and Mt. Baker neighborhood planning areas. Land use allocations in these areas consist primarily of single and multi-family residential, with some limited areas of commercial, and public zoning. The City of Bellingham Comprehensive Plan does not designate potential increase in dwelling units in the watershed, but according to Chris Spens, Senior Environmental Planner, the Silver Beach and Alabama Hill neighborhoods may accommodate 544 and 10 additional dwellings, respectively, at full build-out.<sup>1</sup>

## Potential Future Growth

Over the years many estimates of potential new dwelling units in the Lake Whatcom watershed have been made. These estimates have sometimes varied widely due to the use of different methods and changing regulations. In 1998/99 Whatcom County Planning and Development Services (WCPDS), the City of Bellingham Planning and Community Development Division, and Whatcom County Water District #10 coordinated their efforts to update potential dwelling units in the watershed. This collaborative effort was intended to provide the most accurate estimate of potential new dwelling units using an agreed upon method that included the latest regulations. This method delineated residential development areas in the watershed into seven generalized sub-areas based on location, zoning, and land use history. Table 1 depicts these sub-areas which include the following: Area 1-Sudden Valley with 1,746 total acres; Area 2-Geneva with 523 acres; Area 3-Geneva Urban Growth Area (UGA) with 938 acres; Area 4-City of Bellingham with 680 acres; Area 5-County Fringe UGA with 328 acres; Area 6-North Shore unincorporated with 3801 acres; and Area 7-South Bay with 1406 acres.<sup>3</sup>

Table 1. Potential increases in dwelling units in the Lake Whatcom subareas with residential zoning. <sup>3</sup>

Lake Whatcom Residential Subarea	Number of dwelling Units (1998)	% Increase in Additional Dwelling Units at 80% Build-out in most areas*	% Increase in Additional Dwelling Units at 100% Build-out
Area 1- Sudden Valley	1,716	143%	172%
Area 2 - Geneva (non-UGA)	91	246%	296%
Area 3 - Geneva Urban Growth Area	822	131%	149%
Area 4 - City of Bellingham	817**	67%***^^	67%***^^
Area 5 - County Fringe UGA	593	46%	55%

Area 6 - North Shore Unincorporated	<b>480</b>	<b>241%</b>	<b>290%</b>
Area 7 - South Bay	<b>165</b>	<b>229%</b>	<b>275%</b>
<i>Rural Forestry</i>	<i>9</i>		<i>169 add't units</i>
<b>TOTAL (number of dwelling units):</b>	<b>5,005<sub>(adj)</sub> ^</b> <b>existing units</b>	<b>6,289 additional dwelling units</b>	<b>7,331 additional dwelling units</b>

\*80% is a multiplier used by the joint-planning group for build-out estimates in the County, as described below. Proposed subdivisions in Geneva UGA and Area 4 were assumed 100% build-out potential. \*\*Number utilizes only the Silver Beach Planning Area (with a 100% build-out assumption). The actual number of City watershed dwelling units utilizing applicable portions of 3 other planning areas is 1,129 units. ^Adjusted for 1,129 value. ^^Not adjusted for 1,129 value.

Estimates were generated for each subarea to account for differences in regulations, zoning, and land uses affecting the build out potential between subareas. Assessor's records for 1998 were used to determine lots on record and the total number of current dwelling units. Potential dwelling units were found by subtracting the number of existing units on a parcel from the total potential units based on zoning. For land that could be further subdivided, an 80% multiplier was used to estimate potential dwelling units. Statistically, an area is only developed up to 80% of its maximum potential due to limitations of infrastructure, services, and development regulations. Full build-out (100%) was assumed for subdivisions. Considerations that certainly will affect build-out but were not used include the Sudden Valley density reduction program and the transfer of development rights program.

Table 1 above details the current (1998) number of dwelling units in the seven subareas, and gives the potential increases in dwelling units projected at both 80% and 100% build-out. Under current zoning there is a potential for approximately 6,289 new dwelling units in the residential areas delineated above, at 80% build-out (7,331 new dwelling units at 100% build-out). Based on land use law, environmental constraints, infrastructure requirements and market factors, 100% build-out is highly unlikely. In addition, the areas zoned for Rural Forestry have the potential for 169 additional dwelling units.

The Glenhaven community has a total of 1265 lots. There are a total of 550 developed lots with 400 lots that can be developed.

**Ownership Assessment**

Ownership maps were requested from the major forest landowners in the Lake Whatcom watershed. Bloedel, Crown Pacific, Neilsen Brothers, and Trillium all provided maps of their lands in and around the watershed. John Hancock is also considered a major forest landowner within Whatcom County, but their holdings in the watershed are minimal. Some of their lands were identified with the small parcel assessment.

In addition to the major landowners, the owners of several small parcels were identified through the Whatcom County Assessor's office. These parcels were those that seemed to have importance to our planning process. For the most part, these parcels were inholdings surrounded by DNR or the other major forest landowners and also lands that we might want to negotiate easements for road access.

The information gathered was entered into a GIS layer for future reference (Map C-2). The locations of the boundaries are approximate since they were copied from other maps. This information is also guaranteed to change over time, since lands are frequently sold and traded. It is expected that the information will help us during the current planning, but should not be used for long term reference.